When it Comes to Talking - Less is More!

"Low Tech" Receptive Communication Strategies for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder

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Important information to know about ASD!

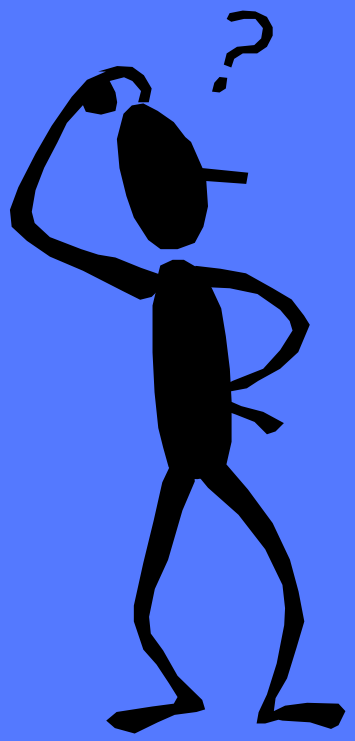
ASD Processing Skills

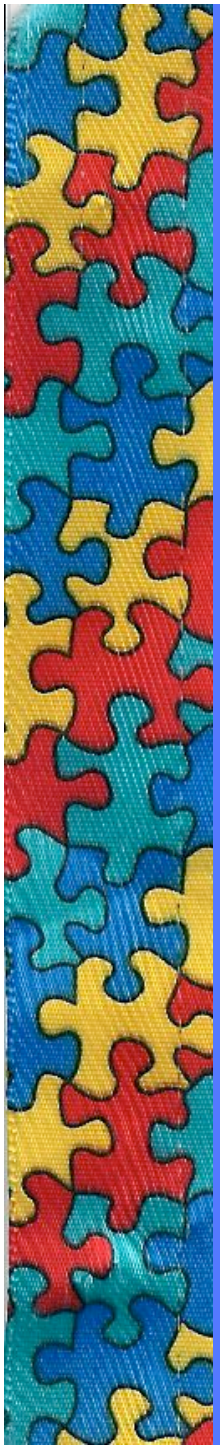
Strengths: Visual Processing

Weaknesses: Auditory Processing

Research to Support!

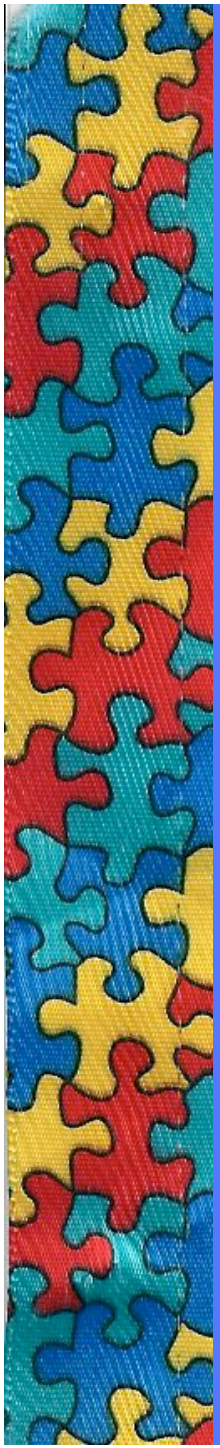
"*Non*-compliance versus *Non*-comprehension?"





Different communication strategies and instructional methods are necessary to teach and communicate to people with ASD, so that they can learn skills in all areas, *and* understand task and environmental expectations

How Do We Communicate to Students with ASD?

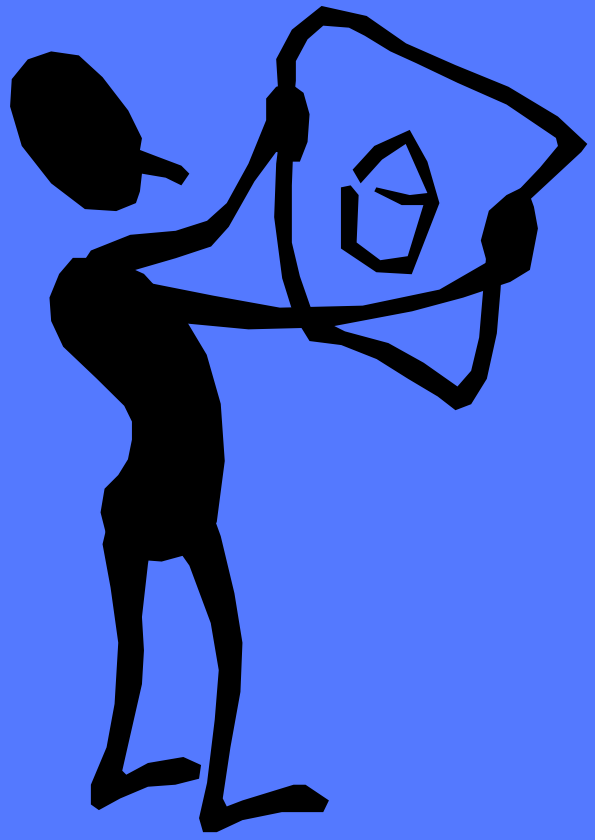


VISUAL

When it comes to talking…

Less is more!!!!!!!

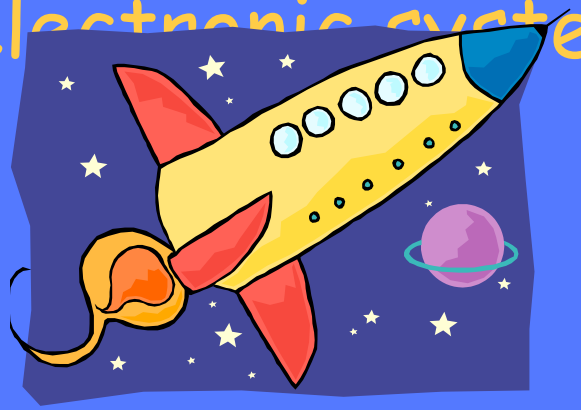
Seeing is Understanding!



How does Technology fit?

Technology = *Perfect* fit for instructional support strategies, as it provides *visual* input for our learners with ASD.

Low Tech = cheap, easy to make and use, non-electronic systems



Primary function of "Low Tech" Visual Instructional Strategies

- *As receptive* communication tools.
- To *give* information.
- To *increase* comprehension and understanding of tasks, activities and the environment.
- To *teach* skills.
- Removes power struggles - Visuals are the boss!!!!

Why do "Low Tech" Visual Instructional Strategies work for people with ASD?

- Addresses/reduces challenging behaviors in a proactive manner.
  - Decreases anxiety / increases calmness.
  - Increases understanding.
  - Teaches how to accept change / increases flexibility.
- *Greatly* increases independent functioning.

Important to consider, what does the student *understand* visually?

- Modeling - *showing* the students how to do something.
  - Real-life
  - Audio visual (DVD; computer)
- Visual representation systems

VISUAL REPRESENTATION SYSTEMS

Concrete

- Real objects (3-D)
- Miniature real objects (3-D)
- True Object Based Icons (TOBIs) (2-D)
- Photographs (2-D)
- Real drawings (2-D)
- Line drawings (color / black and white) (2-D)
- Written word (2-D)

Abstract

TOBIs
by Barbara Bloomfield

However, it is also important to keep in mind…

#1 INTERVENTION STRATEGY

Understanding of ASD!

ASD Iceberg

Behaviors of ASD

Water line

Features/Characteristics of ASD

Learning/thinking/processing differences

Social relation differences

Communication differences

Sensory Processing differences

Restricted/repetitive behaviors

Rigid, inflexible thinking

Stokes, 2001

Adapted from Susan Boswell
Division TEACCH, 2000

Educational Programming: Best Practice = *Team* Approach

ASD Iceberg Planning Guide

Behavior	Features/ Characteristic	Teaching Tool / Support Strategy	Person Resp. Make/teach
S. Stokes	2001		

Today's Session

ASD Iceberg Planning Guide

Behavior	Features/ Characteristic	Teaching Tool / Support Strategy	Person Resp. Make/teach
Tip of the iceberg	Beneath the water line	**What now?!?!**	

S. Stokes 2001

Case Study: Hunter

- 6 year old diagnosed with autistic disorder.
- Tip of the iceberg behaviors: controlling; meltdowns for transitions; disruptive for group time; challenging behaviors when directed to stop desired activities.
- Behavior management strategy: "thinking chair".
- Success of strategy? None. Behaviors continued.

Hunter's ASD Iceberg

Non-compliant
Refusal to work

Water line

Features/Characteristics of ASD

Learning/thinking/processing differences

Social differences

Communication differences

Sensory Processing differences

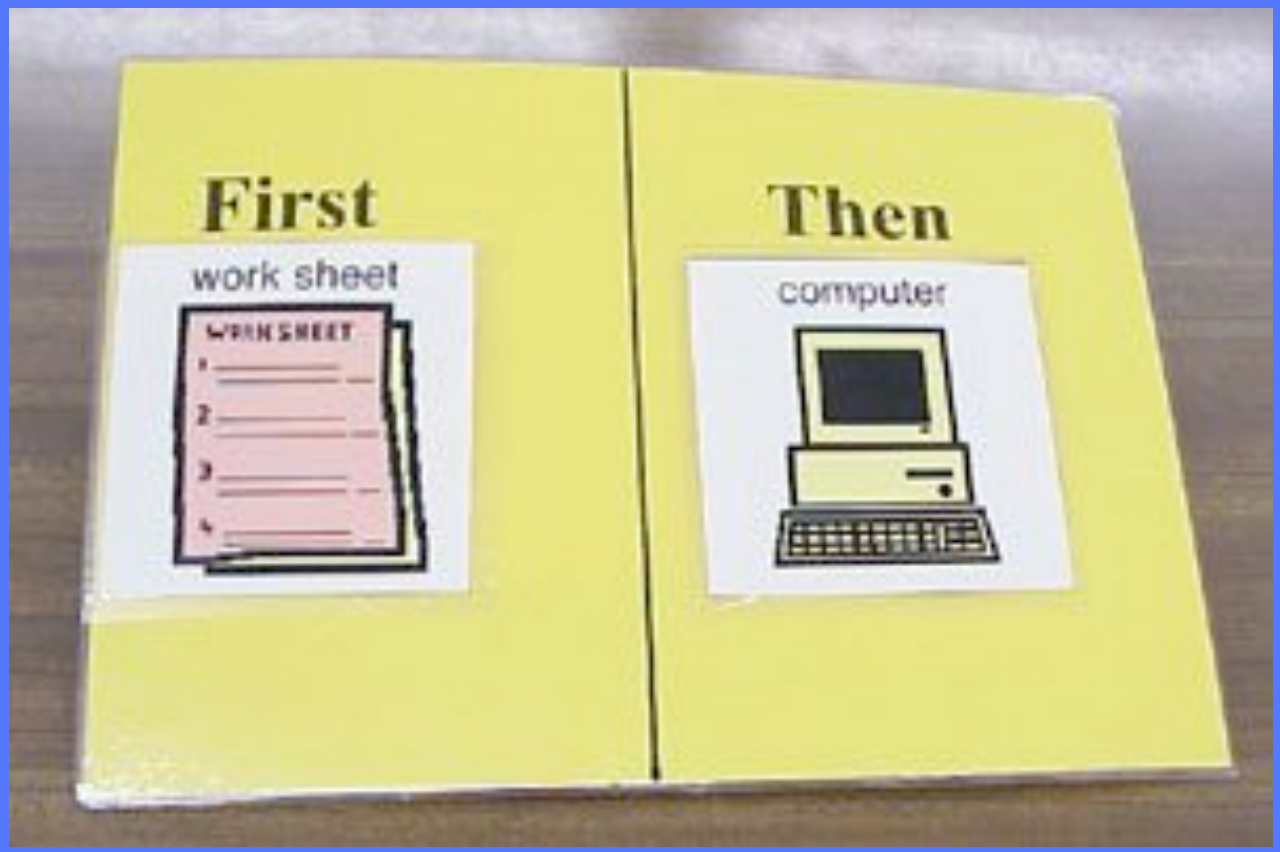
Restricted/repetitive behaviors
Rigid, inflexible thinking

Adapted from Susan Boswell
Division TEACCH, 2000

Hunter: Intervention Strategies

- Use of visual receptive communication strategies to increase *comprehension* and *understanding* for:
  - Transitions
  - "Stopping" an activity
  - Boundaries for group time

First - Then



Time Timer

TIME TIMER

7707 Camargo Road
Cincinnati, OH 45243

(877) 771-TIME (8463)
FAX (513) 561-4699

Activity Termination Cards

Group Time

Case Study: Sean

- 8th grade student with Asperger's Syndrome.
- Tip of the iceberg behavior: Gradual refusal to do academic work (starting with math), until he finally refused to do *any* academics. Labeled as "non-compliant" and "controlling".
- Behavior management strategy: Sent to principal's office.
- Success of behavior management strategy?
  - Continued to refuse to work in principal's office.

Sean's ASD Iceberg

Non-compliant
Refusal to work

Water line

Features/Characteristics of ASD

Learning/thinking/processing differences

Social differences

Communication differences

Sensory Processing differences

Restricted/repetitive behaviors
Rigid, inflexible thinking

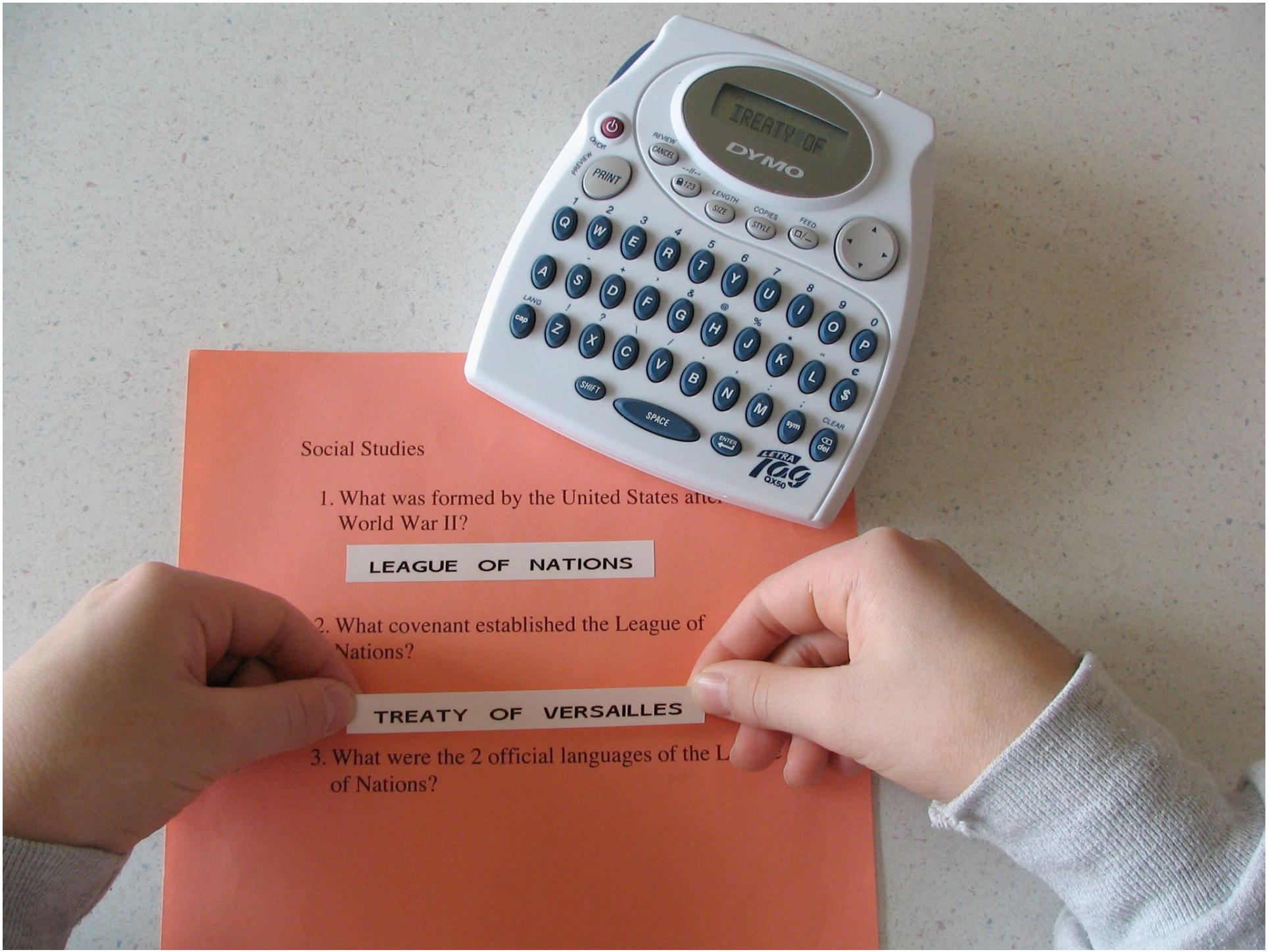
Adapted from Susan Boswell
Division TEACCH, 2000

Sean: Intervention Strategies

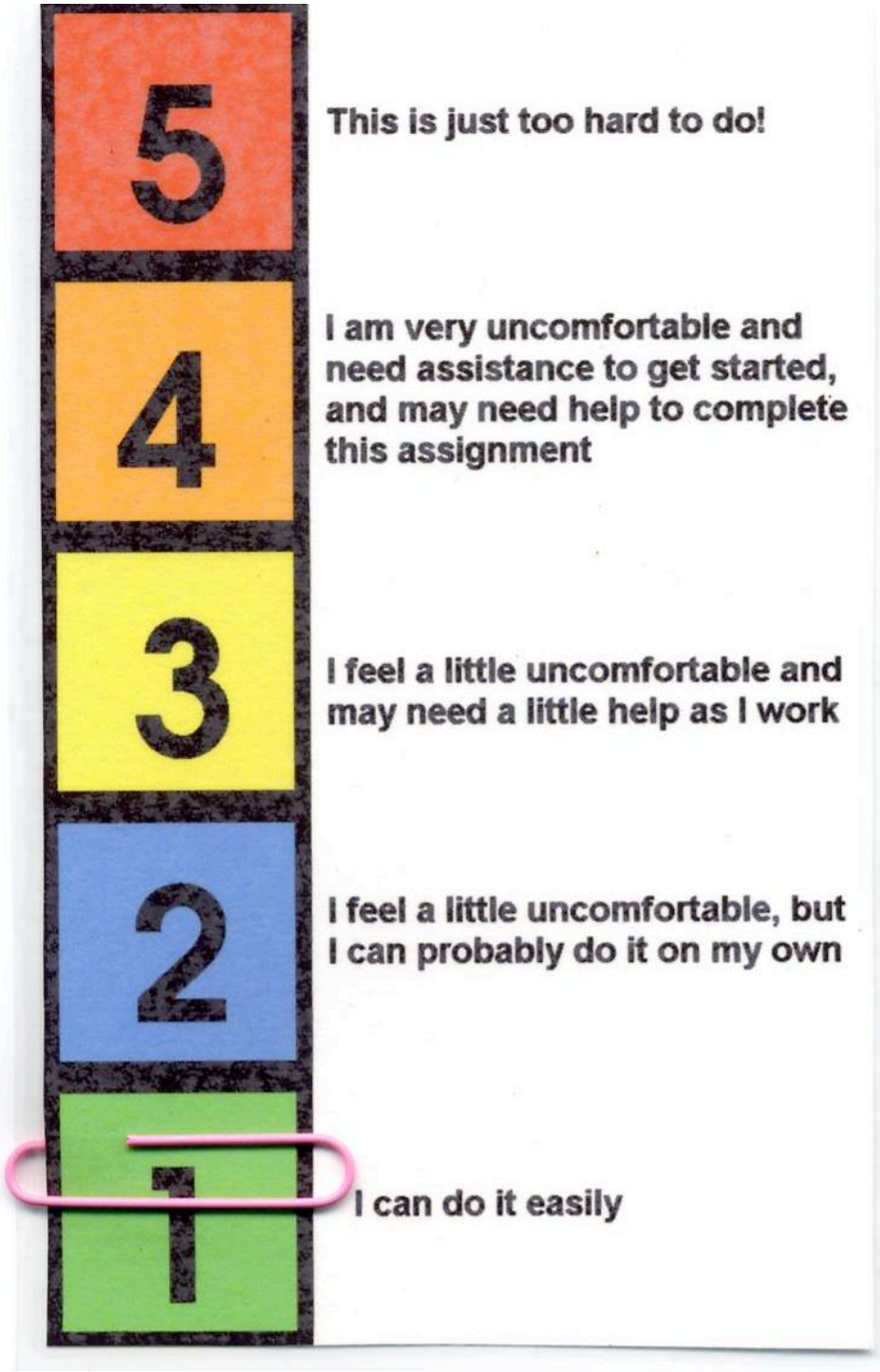
- Reduce amount / difficulty of academics.
- Provide clear, visual expectations per academic task.
- Reduce written language response effort.
  - Access to technology
- Increase opportunities for breaks, to decrease anxiety.
- Visual "5 Point Scale" to assist with

Math

- Page 63, problems 1-5
- 5 minute break
- Math worksheet
- 5 minute break


TREATY OF
DYMO
PRINT
Social Studies
1. What was formed by the United States afte
World War II?
LEAGUE OF NATIONS
2. What covenant established the League of
Nations?
TREATY OF VERSAILLES
3. What were the 2 official languages of the L
of Nations?

Take a Break



Idea from Carol Gray

5-Point Scale:
Kari Dunn Buron

ASD Iceberg Planning Guide

Behavior	Features/ Characteristic	Teaching Tool / Support Strategy	Person Resp. Make/teach
Non-compliant Refusal to work Controlling Total shut-down	Perfectionism Fear of failure	•Reduce academic demands: amount & difficulty. •Clear visual expect. for all academics (checklists) •Access to Alpha-Smart or labelmaker •Breaks •5 Point Scale	All teachers to implement SPED to provide Alpha-Smart & Label-maker SLP to make 5 Point Scale

S. Stokes 2001

"Low Tech" *Visual* Environmental Strategies to Increase Comprehension, Attending and Independent Functioning

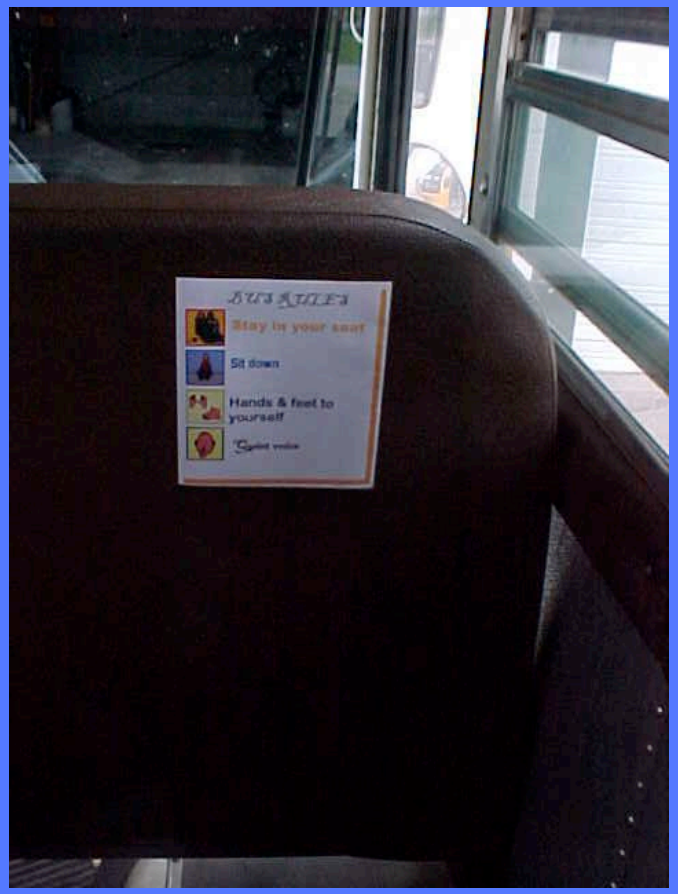
Environmental Strategies

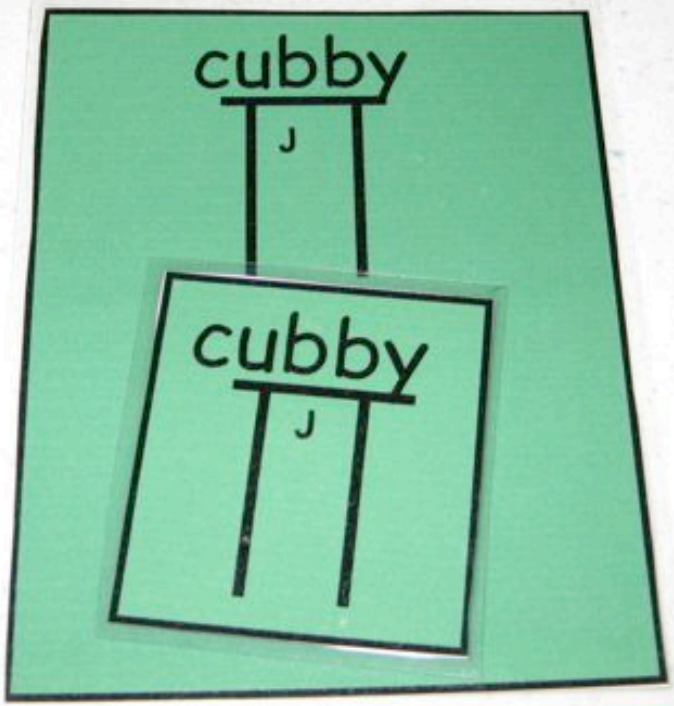
- Bus
  - Assigned seating (see photos)
  - Bus rules (see photo)
- Hallway: Cubby / Locker
  - Visually defined (see photos)
  - Procedure checklist (see photos)
  - On end of row - visually defined (see photo)
  - Locker schedule (see photo)
  - Expectations - “walking” versus “running” (see photo)

Bus

Bus

Bus

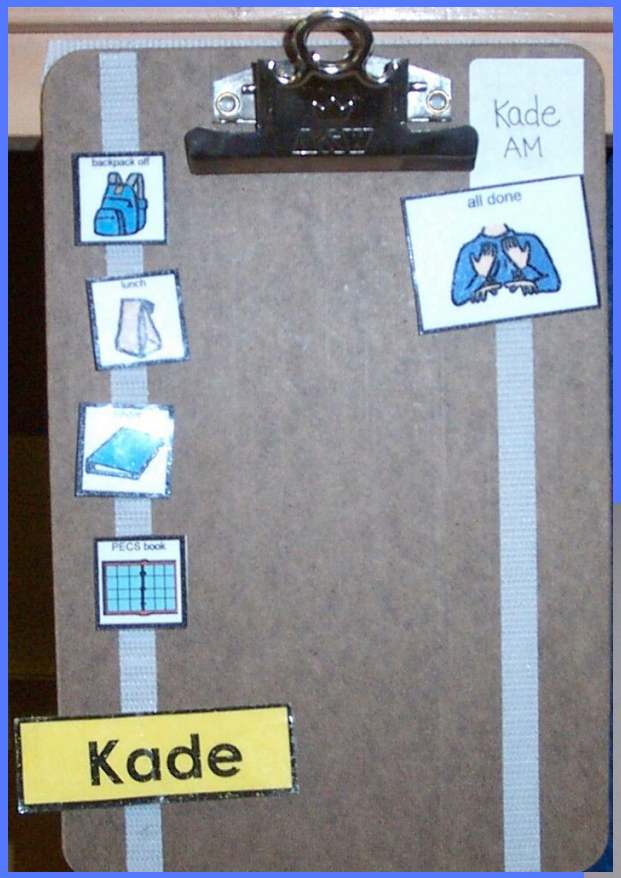


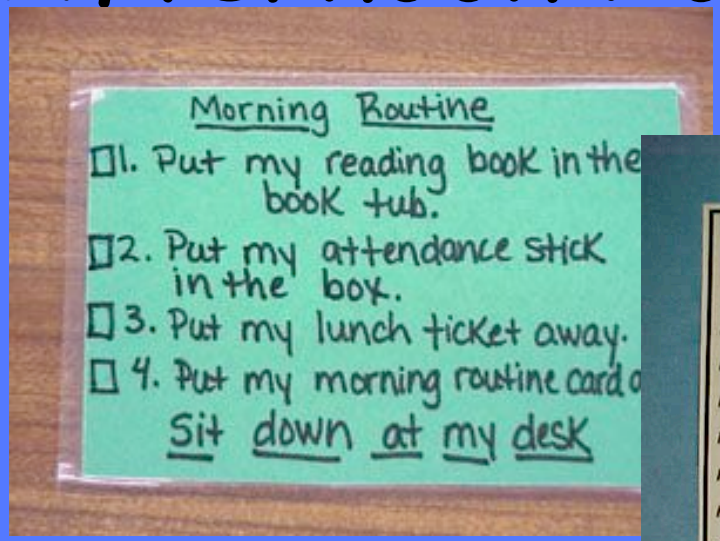

cubby
J
cubby
J

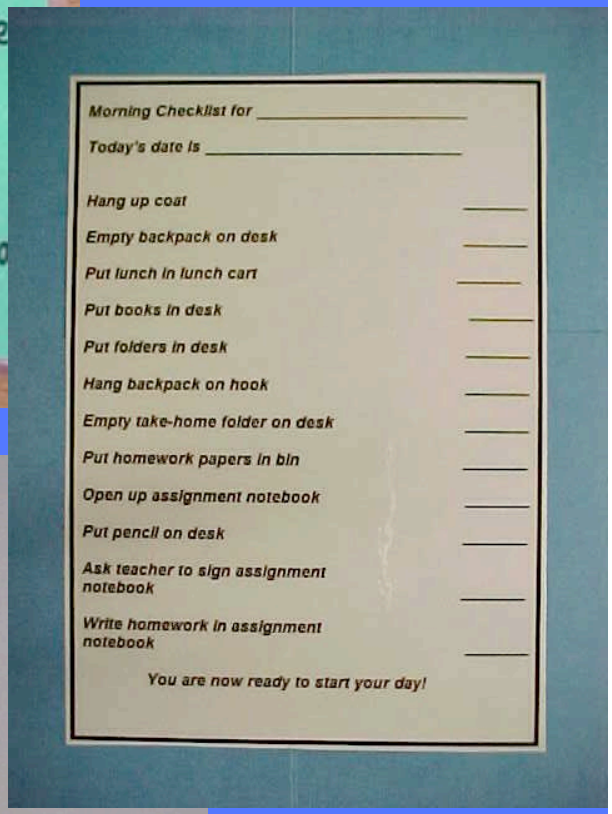
Cubby Area

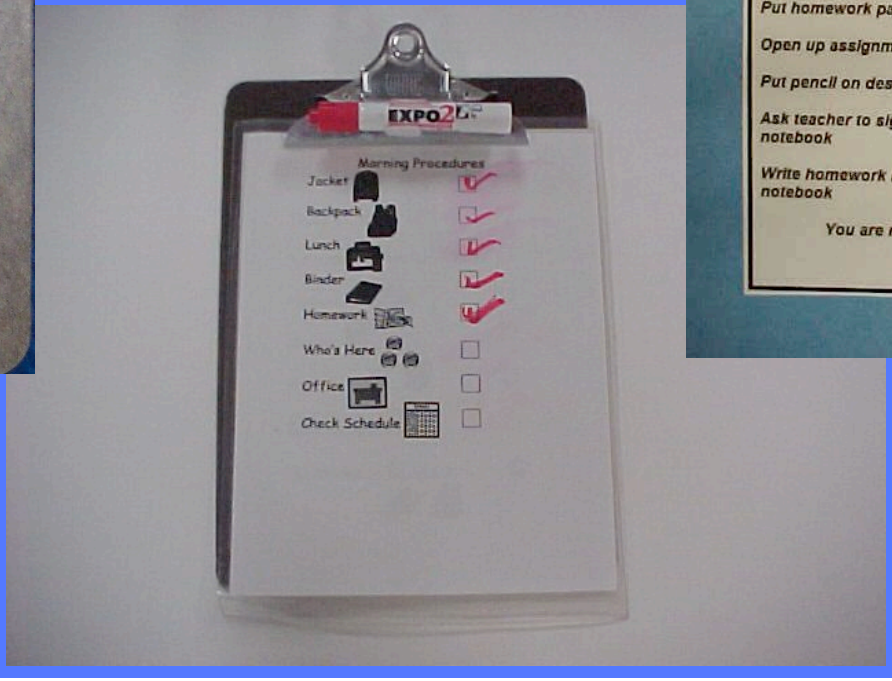
Cubby Area

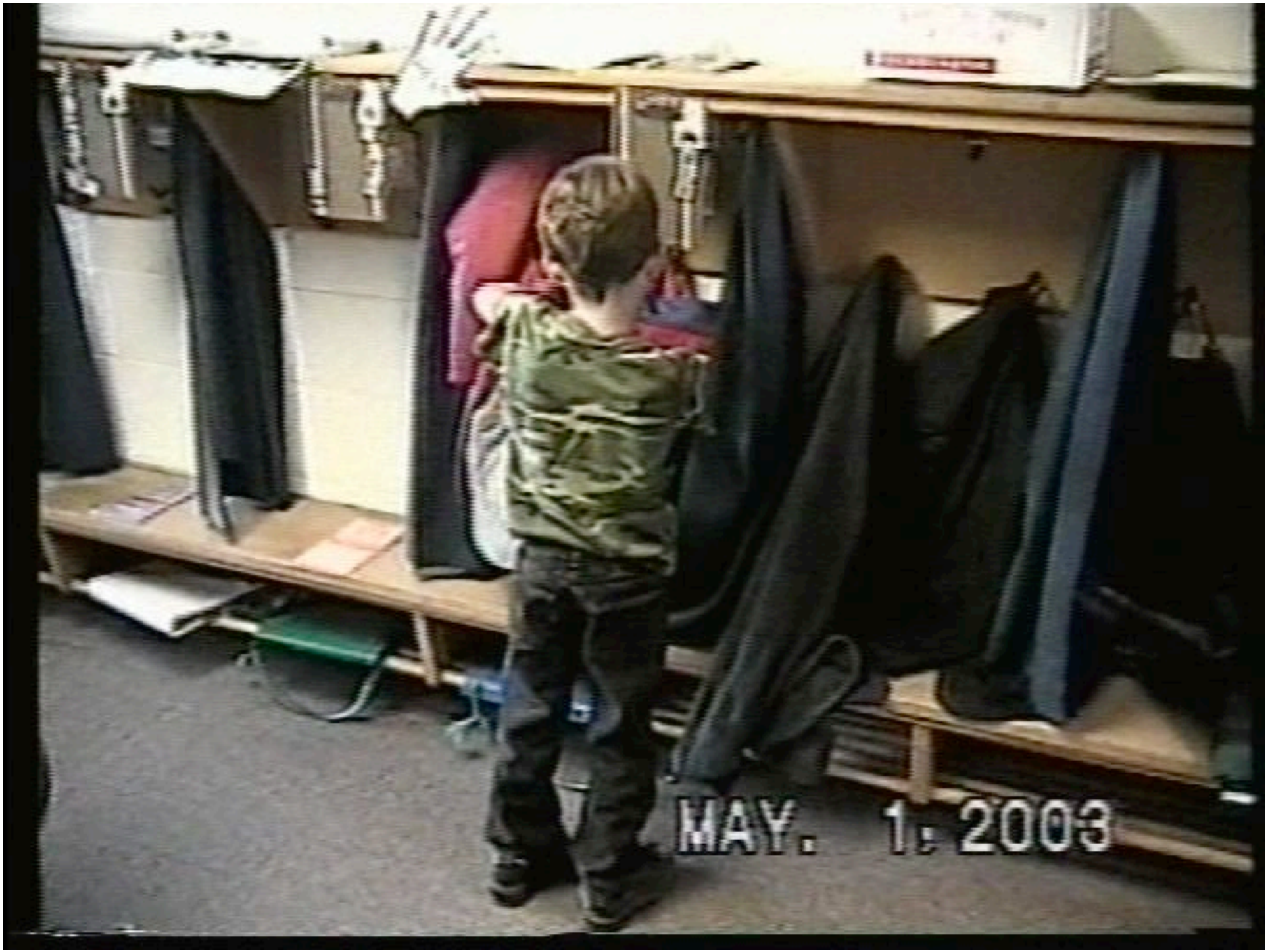
Morning/Afternoon Routines





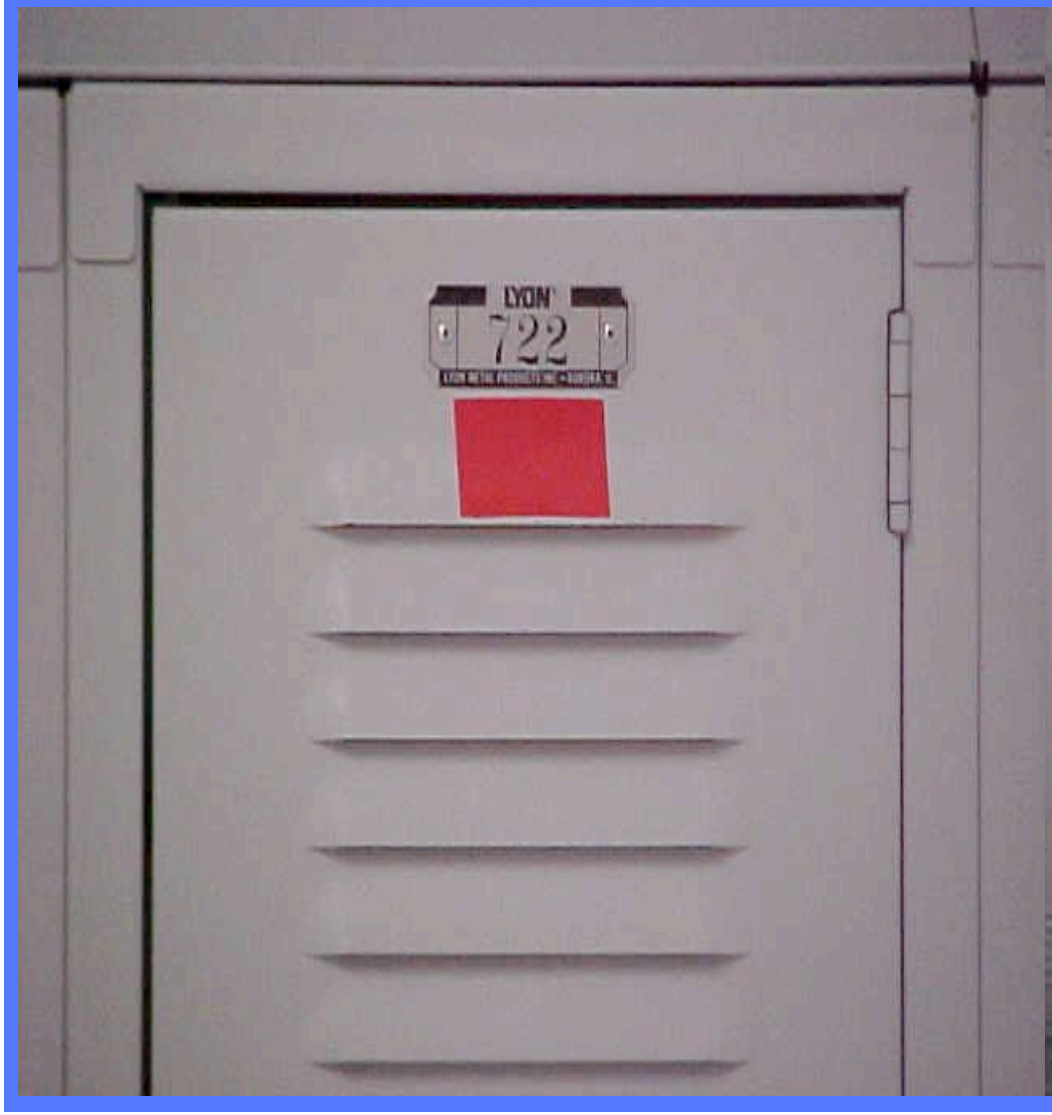





MAY. 1, 2003

Self-help:
Getting Ready for Recess

Lockers

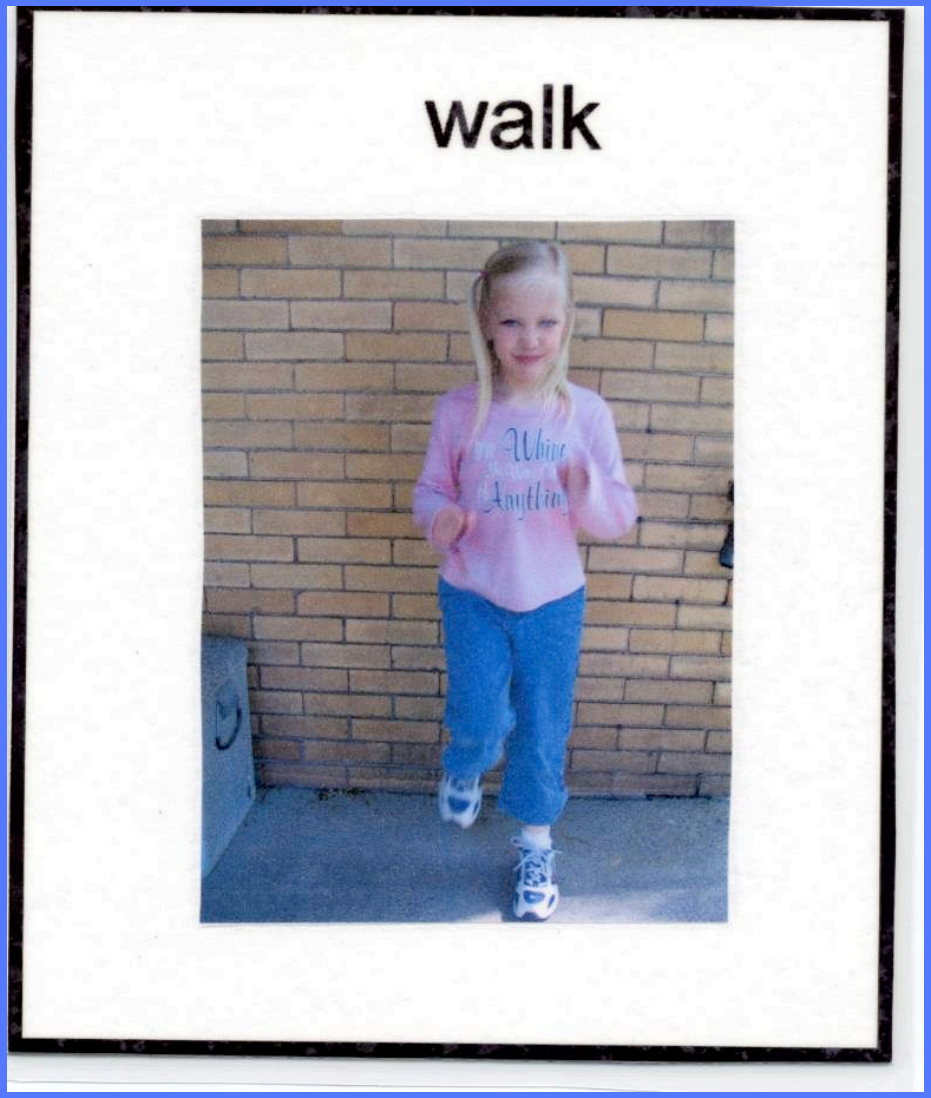


Locker Schedule

Period	**Class**	**Supplies**
Before school	*Get materials*	*for periods 1,2, 3*
1A	Art	Assign notebook, art supplies bag
1B	Phy Ed	Assign notebook
2	Science	Assign notebook, science book, folder, pencil
3	Reading	Assign notebook, english book, pencil **Return books to locker. Get lunch card**

1st Hour: Math	Take out:	Math book Red math folder Red math notebook
2nd Hour: Science	Put back: Take out:	Math book, folder, notebook Science book Yellow folder Yellow notebook
3rd Hour: Gym	Put back: Get out:	Science book, folder, notebook Nothing
4th Hour: Language Arts	Put back: Take out:	Anything you brought from gym Language Arts book Blue language arts folder Blue language arts notebook
Lunch	Put back: Take out:	Language arts book, folder, notebook Lunch
5th Hour: Study Hall	Put back: Take out:	Lunch "ASSIGNMENTS TO DO" folder
6th Hour: Social Studies	Put back: Take out:	All books and assignments from study hall Social Studies book Purple social studies folder Purple social studies notebook
7th Hour: Spanish	Put back: Take out:	Social studies book, folder, notebook Spanish book Green Spanish folder Green Spanish notebook
End of School:	Follow *Going Home Procedure Checklist*	

Context Expectations: Hallway



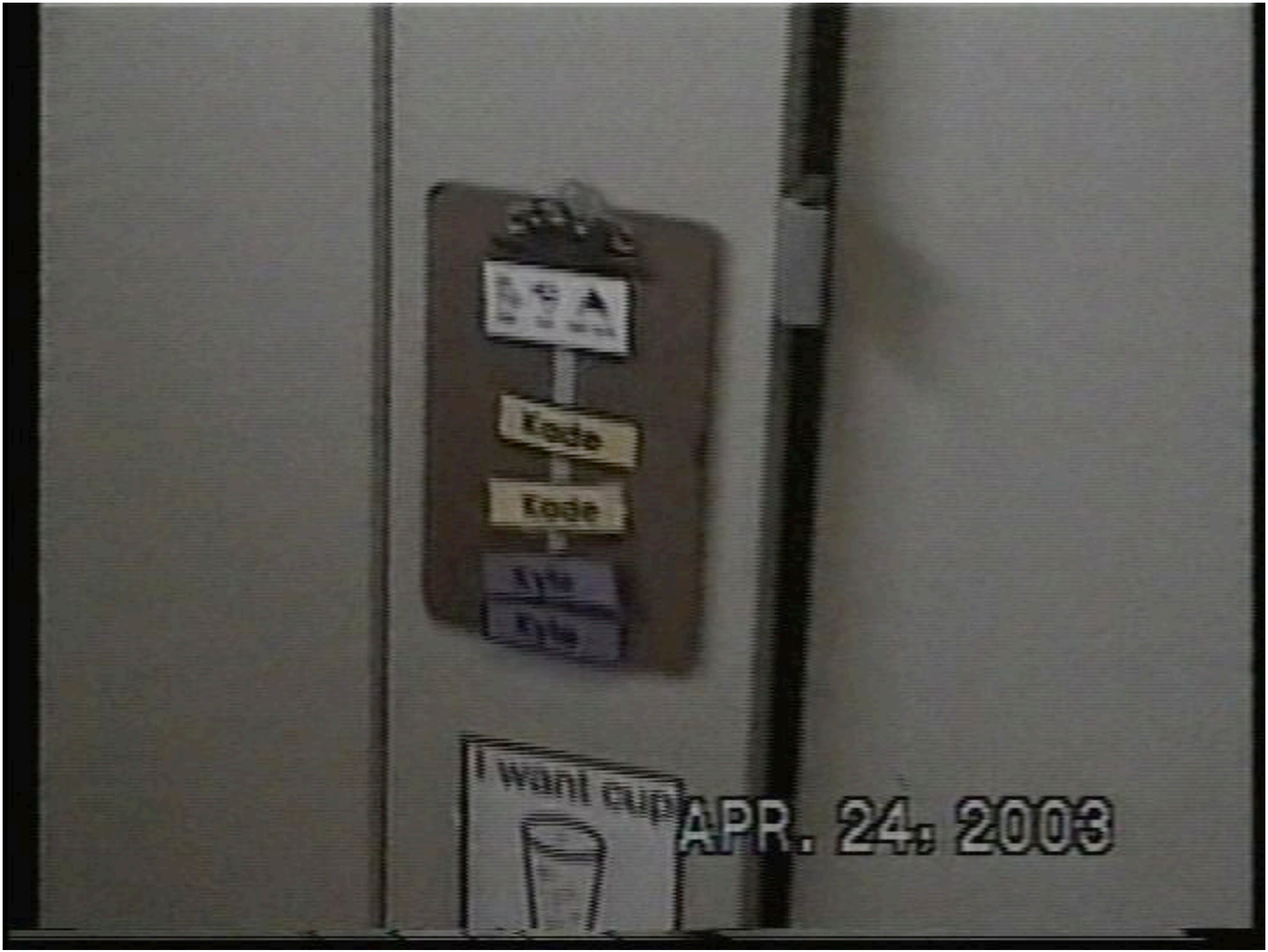
Environmental Strategies

- Cafeteria
  - Assigned seat
  - Boundaries to teach food "ownership" (see photo)
- Bathroom
  - Instructional strategies to teach toileting skills (see photo)
  - Bathroom pass (see photo)
  - Scheduled? (see photo)

Environmental Strategies: Lunch

Self-help: Toileting

Self-help: Toileting


USA
Code
Code
I want cup
APR. 24, 2003

bathroom

Bathroom Pass
1. Use toilet
2. Flush toilet
3. Wash hands
4. Dry hands
5. Return to class

Bathroom Schedule - MS / HS

Period	Class	Location
Before school	*Go to bathroom*	*Next to homeroom*
1A	Art	
1B	Phy Ed	In locker room
2	Science	Next to science class
3	Reading	
Lunch		**In commons**

Environmental Strategies

- Playground
  - Lining up (see photo)
  - Context expectations (see photo)
- Class seating considerations
  - Alternative / distraction-free seat for independent work (see photo)
- Gymnasium / Physical Education
  - Visually defined "gym spot" (see photo0
  - Schedule of activities (see photo)
  - Locker room
    - Checklist (see photo)

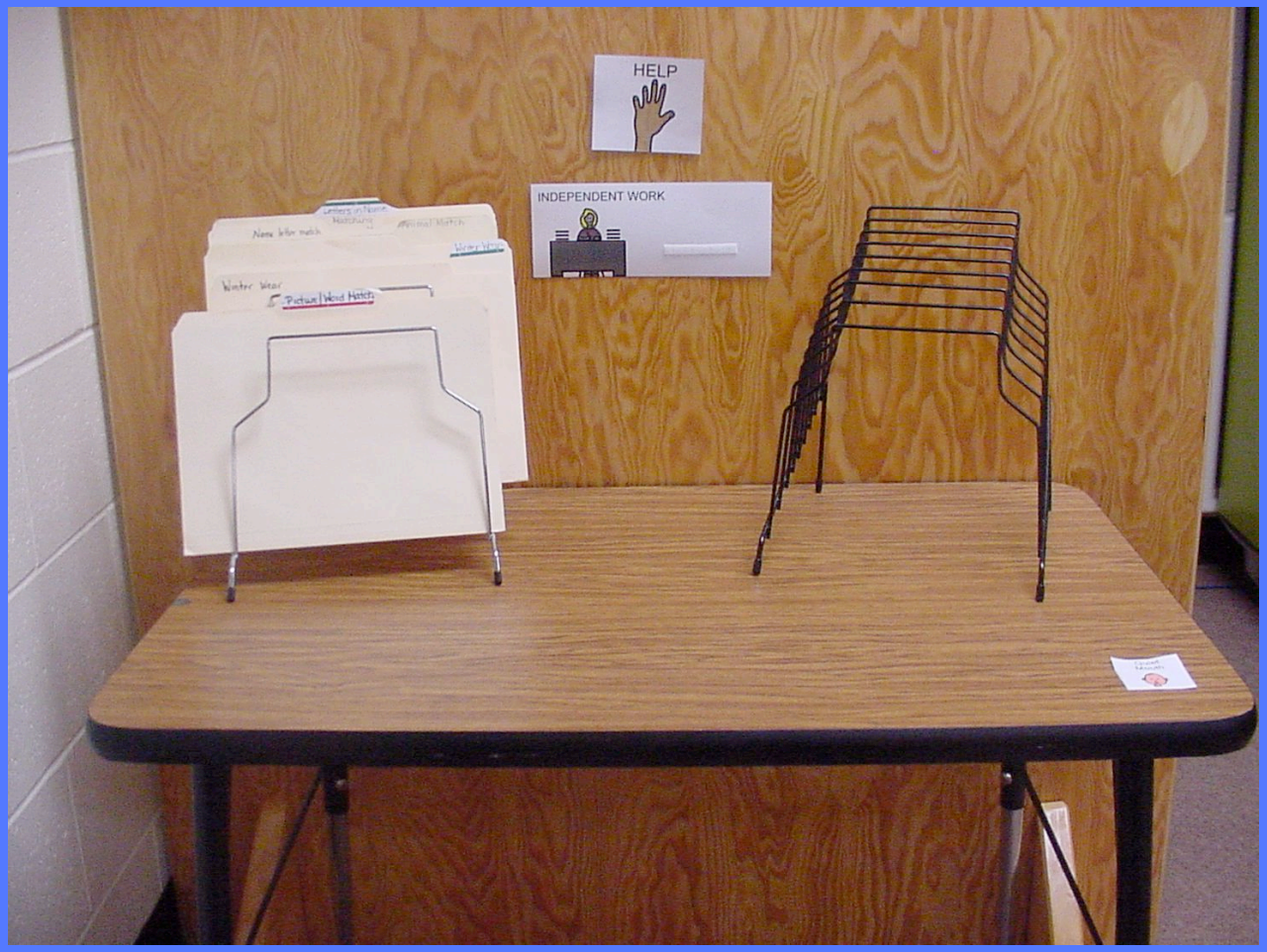
Environmental Strategies: Recess

Recess: Lining up

Context Expectations: Recess

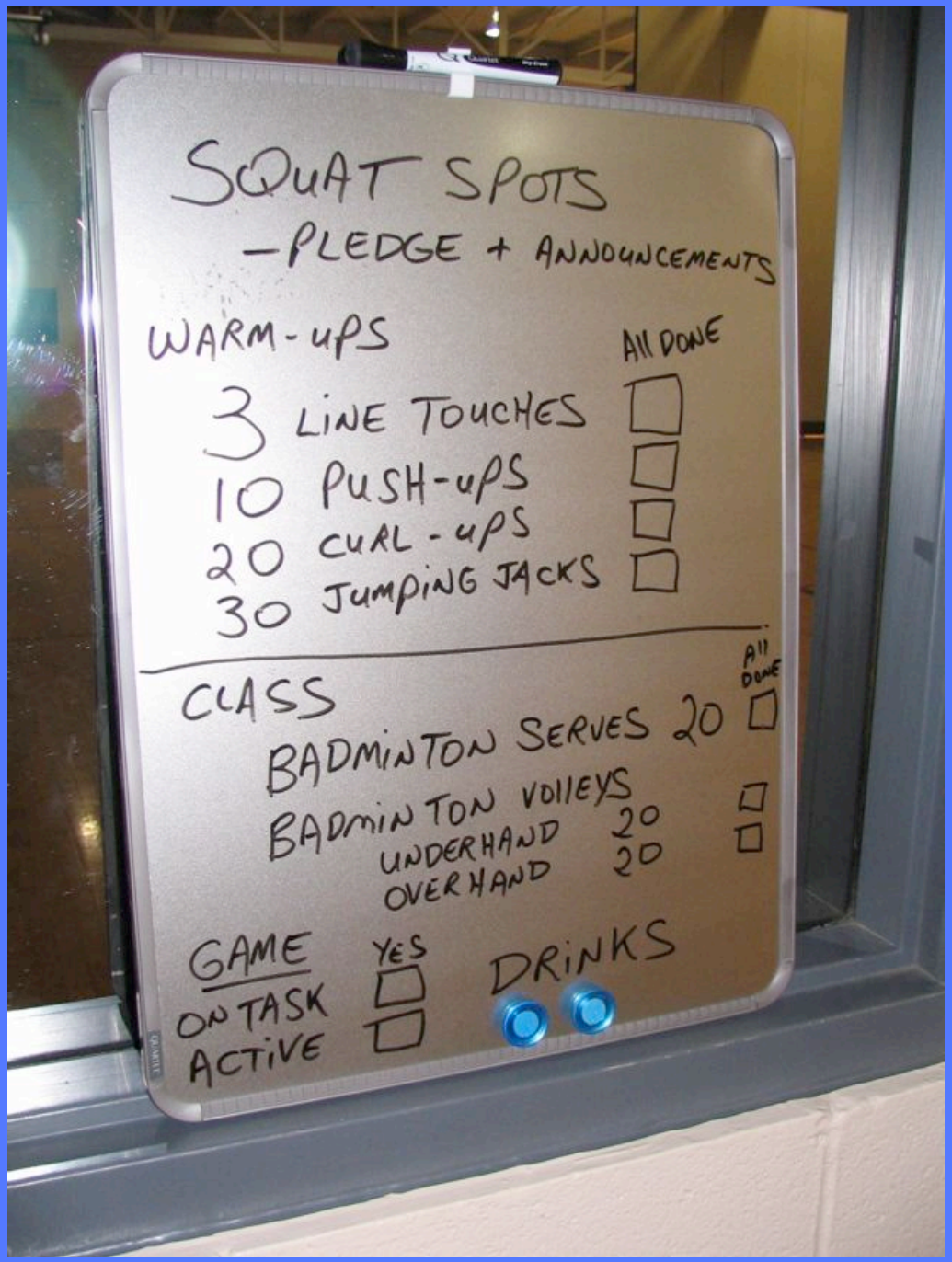
Environmental Strategies: Independent Work Area

Environmental Strategies: Independent Work Area



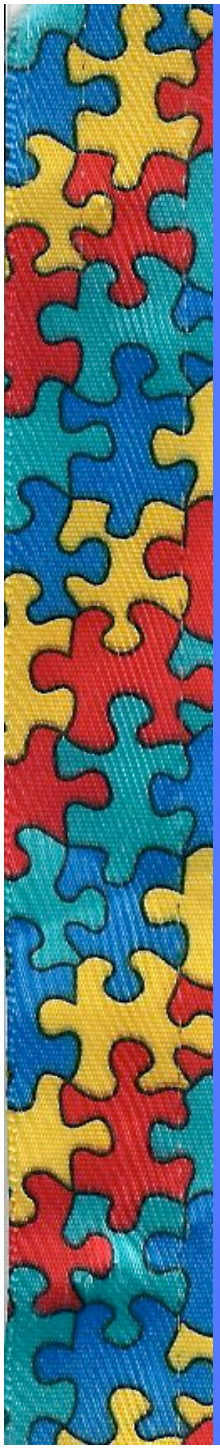
Gym Class: Gym "Spot"

Phy Ed. Schedule


SQUAT SPOTS
-PLEDGE + ANNOUNCEMENTS
WARM-UPS
ALL DONE
3 LINE TOUCHES
10 PUSH-UPS
20 CURL-UPS
30 JUMPING JACKS
CLASS
ALL DONE
BADMINTON SERVES 20
BADMINTON VOLLEYS
UNDERHAND 20
OVERHAND 20
GAME
YES
ON TASK
ACTIVE
DRINKS

Locker Room Checklist

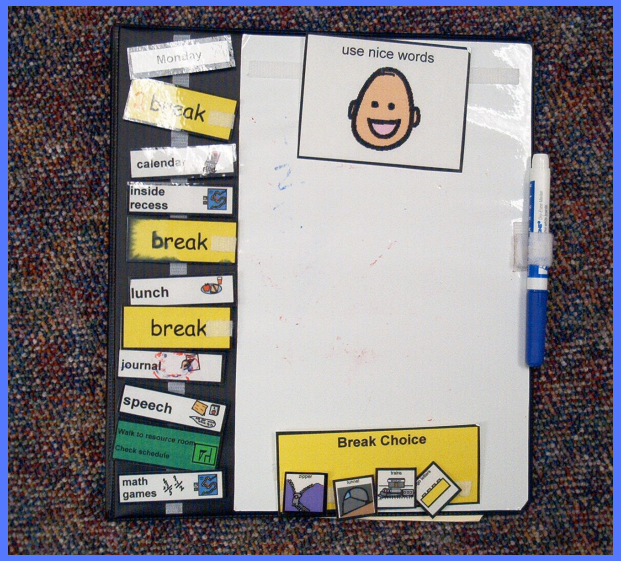
- ❑ Open locker 65D
  - ❑ Combination: 29-47
- ❑ Get dressed for gym
  - ❑ Gym shirt on
  - ❑ Gym shorts on
  - ❑ Gym shoes on
  - ❑ Put school clothes in locker
  - ❑ Close locker
  - ❑ Go to gym and find squad spot
- ❑ Give checklist to teacher



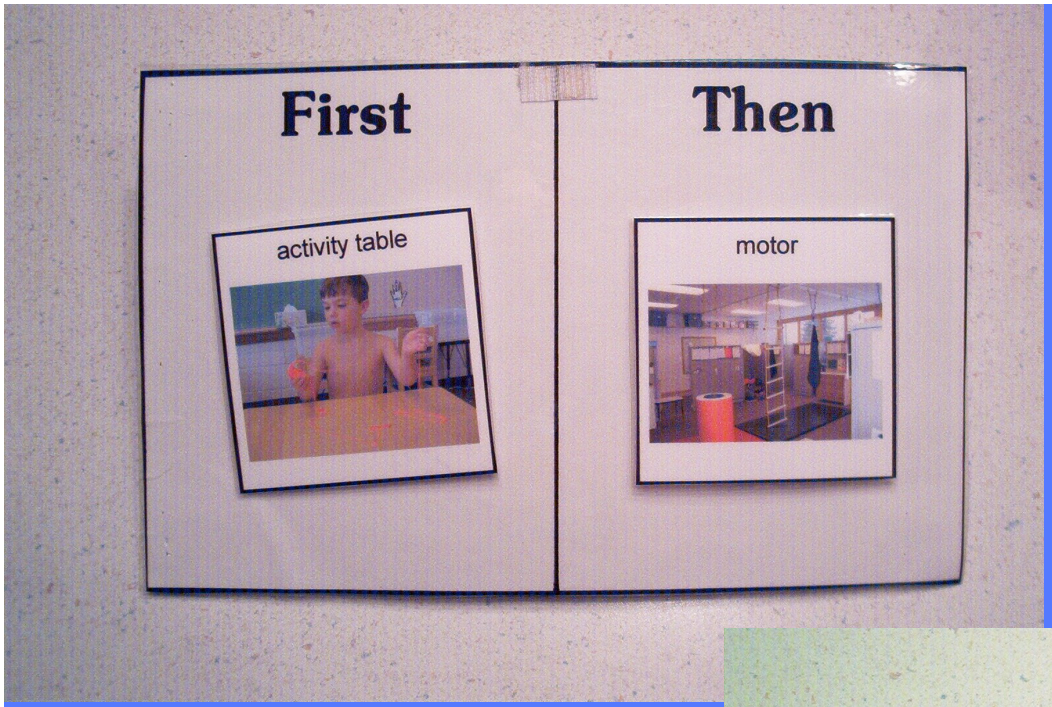
Additional "Low Tech" Visual Instructional Strategies to Increase Comprehension, Attention, and Independent Functioning

Don't Forget!!!!!!

Individual Visual Schedules

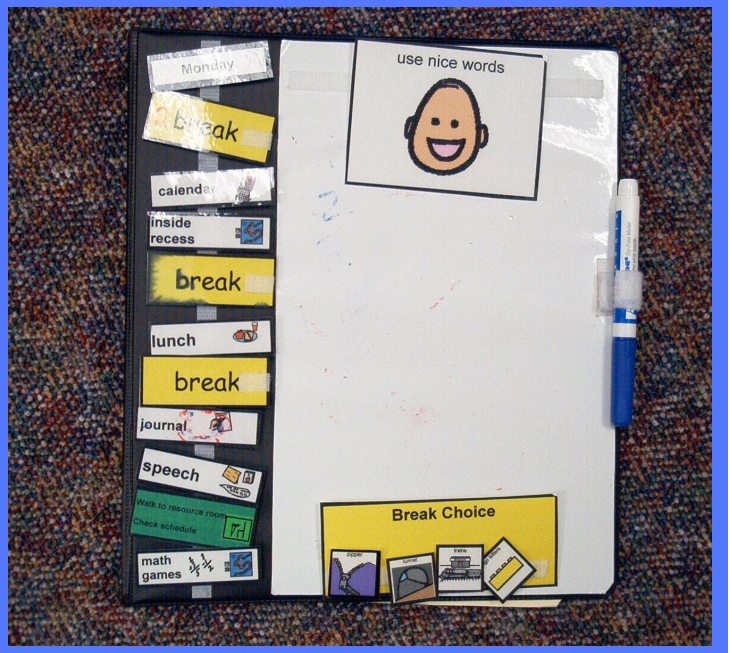


Schedule Examples: Early Childhood

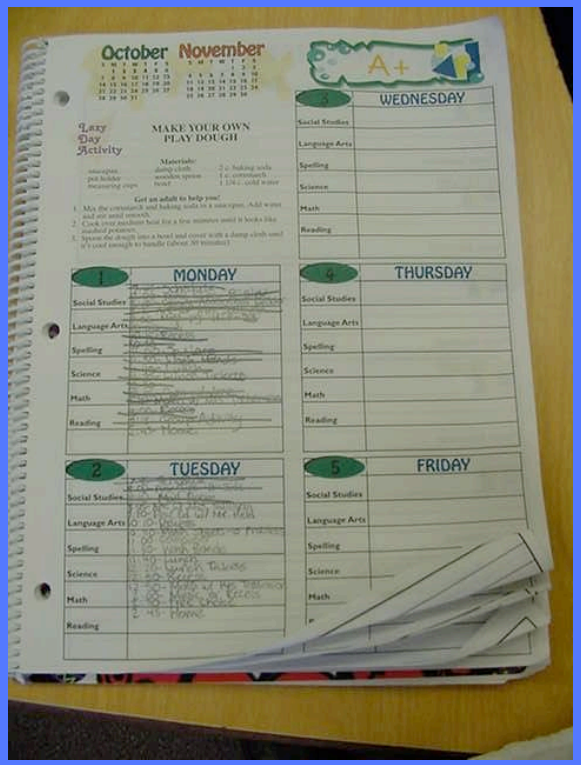


"First - Then" To *teach* how to use a schedule

Schedule Examples: Elementary



Visual Schedules:
Middle / High School



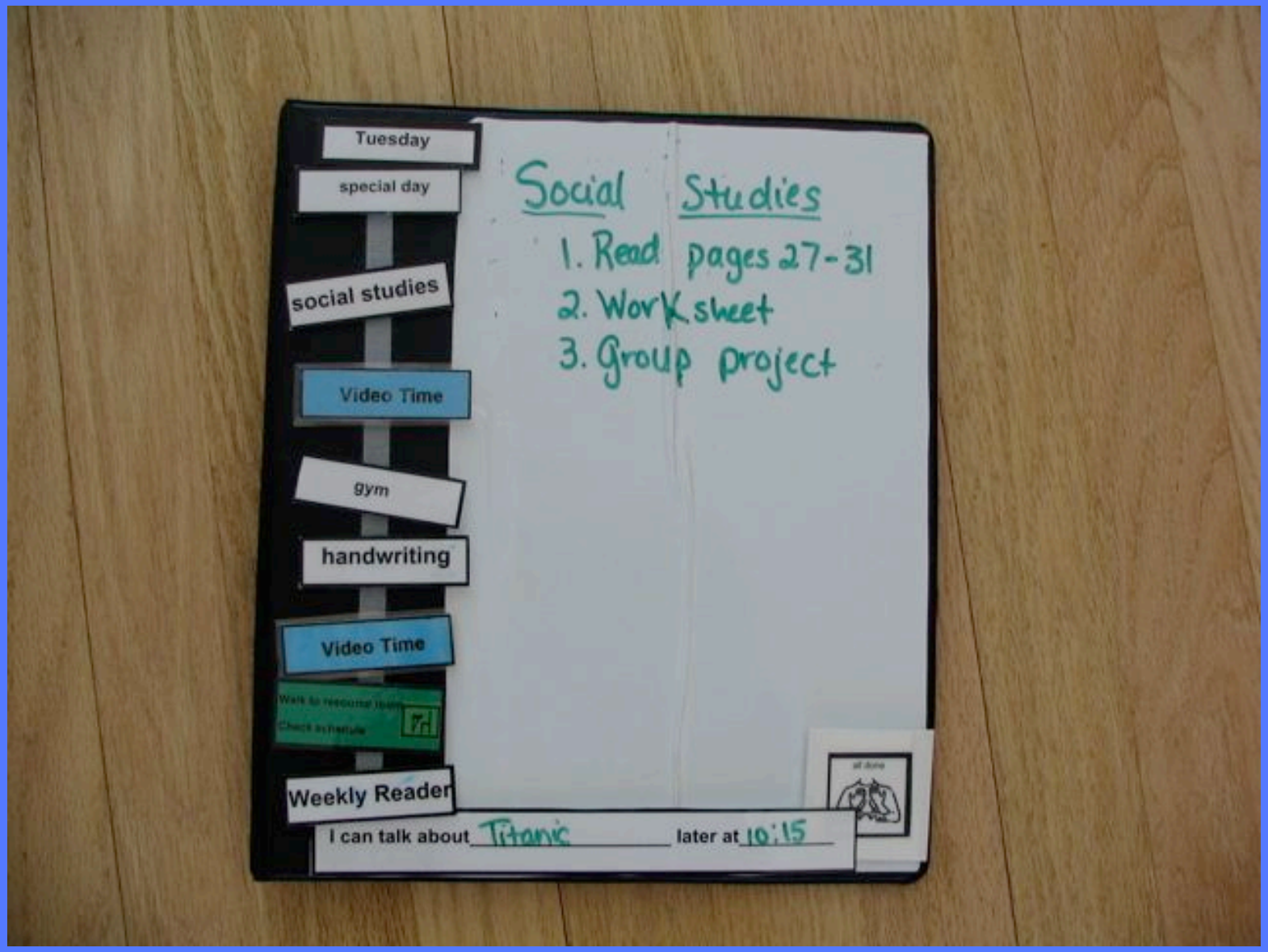
iQuest by LeapFrog

PAT M.
SCHOOL SCHEDULE
DATE: _____

Class	**Things to Remember**	**Assignments**	**Initials**
Hour 1 **Social Skills**	-Stay on topic -No blurting -Keep volume down (2 or 3) -Take short turns and let others talk		
Hour 2 **Study Hall**	-Get right to work -Put personal book away -Keep volume down (2 or 3) -NO ARGUING!		
Hour 3 **World History**	-Don't chat with Ms. K before class→she's busy! -Come in…sit down…get out assignment or notebook -SHORT answers about homework…NOT TV! -DO NOT do homework or read in class→listen and try to take notes		
Hour 4 **IM2**	-Keep comments SHORT and on topic -Don't get upset when Mr. B calls on someone else -Stay seated when you have a question during work time: MR. B WILL GET TO YOU!!		

By Mary Ann Etling

Activity Schedule: Social Studies



Manage High Interests

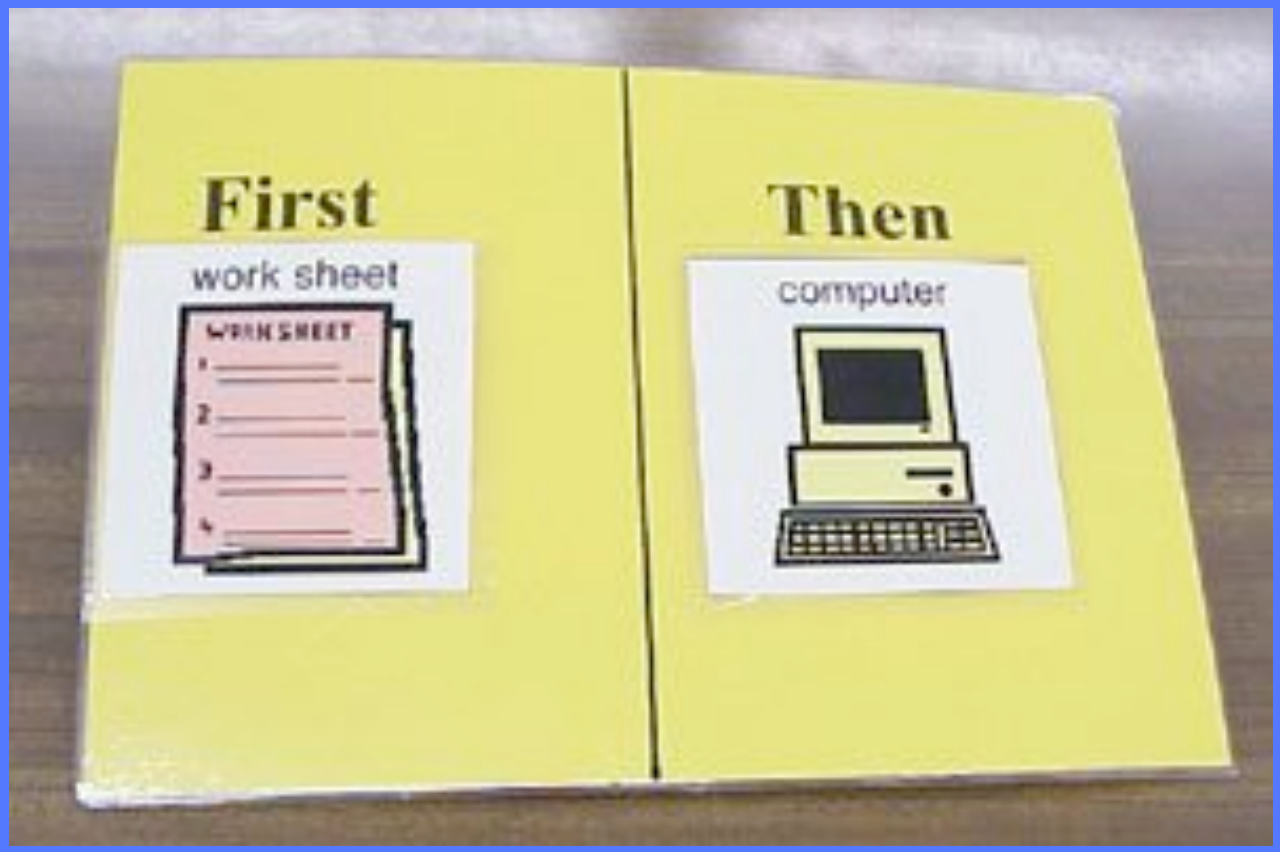
Stephen
Fine Motor
Group Time
string

Wait Time Markers

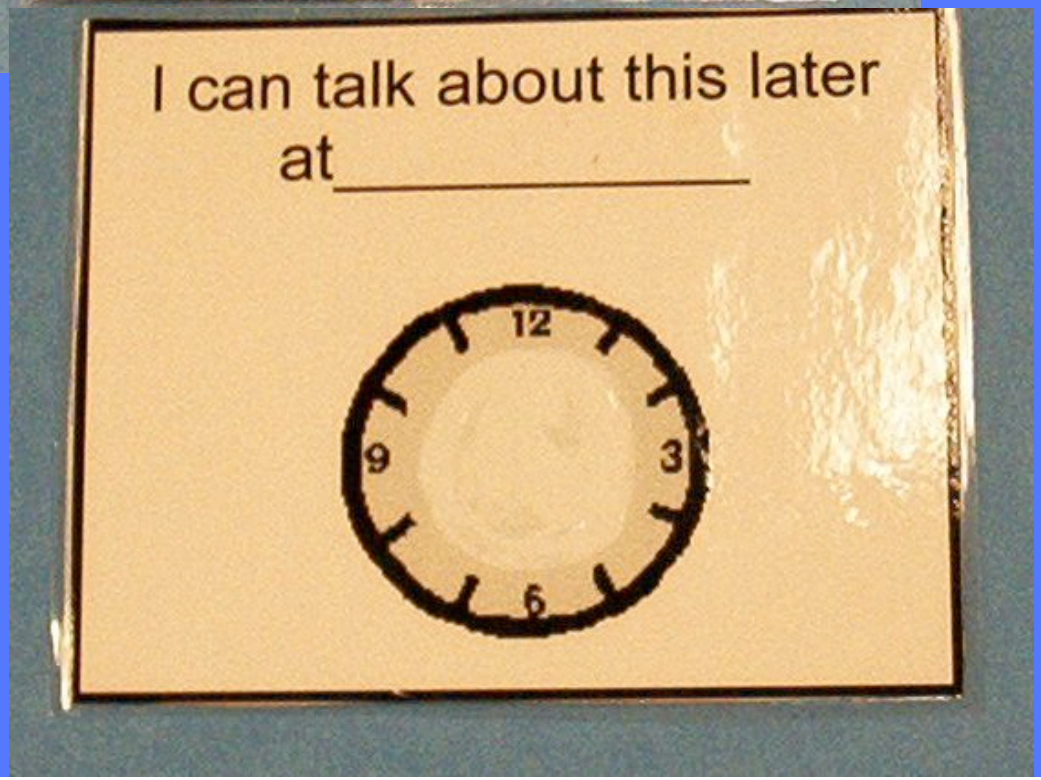
Visual Instructions: Lanyard

Time Timer Watch

"First - Then": In *addition* to schedule - to *visually* draw relationships



First	Then
Otter book	Fish tank

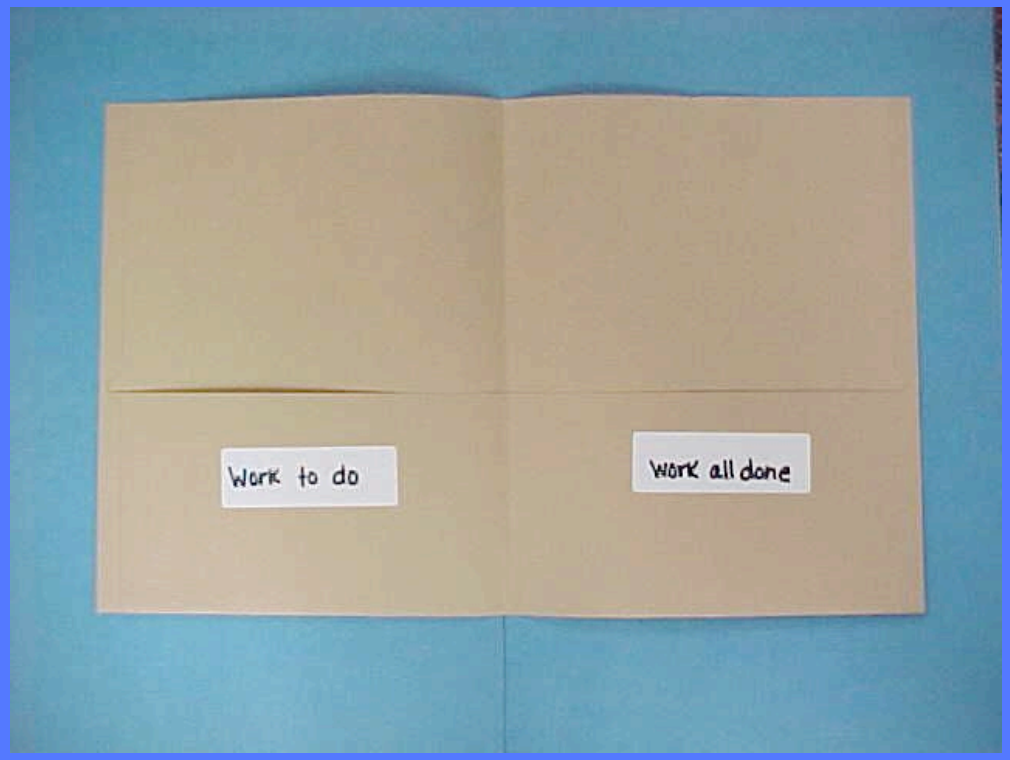


"Letting Go"

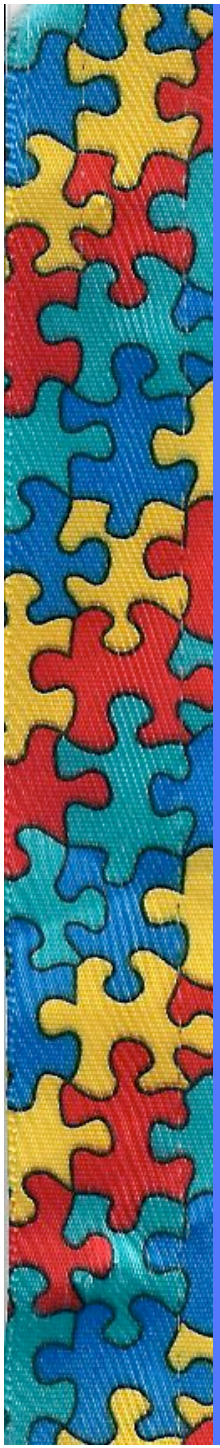
Stick 'em Note - MS/HS

STOP!
Talk about this later at 8:53

To Be Finished Later Folder



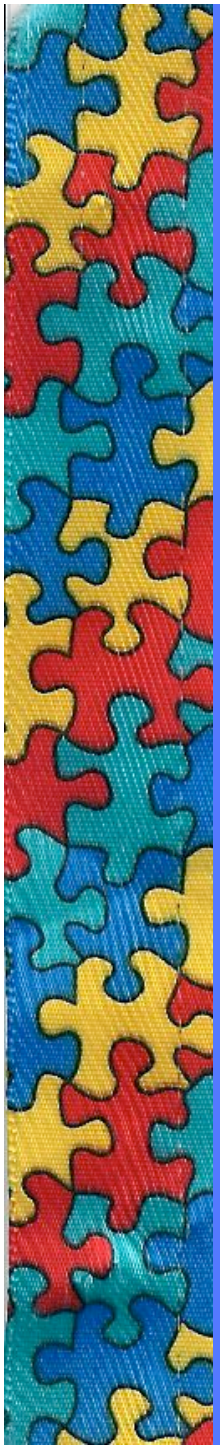
May need to even put "finish later" time on schedule



The Puzzle

The puzzle is incomplete, but I do not fit. My edges are rough, my curves don't match the indentations, my colors are muted (compared to the other pieces), and my "picture" is not quite right. The puzzle is incomplete. But how do I fit? I have searched for other pieces only to find them ill-fitting.

Until…



One day, the puzzle-solver found me and smoothed my edges, enhanced my colors, rounded my curves, and put my "picture" into focus. I still don't fit every piece, but each day more and more come together for me. I may never fit every puzzle, but thanks to you, I have found my place in many.

May we all be "puzzle-solvers"

Resources

- Autism: Interventions and Strategies for Success *by* Susan L. Stokes, 2000. A publication including 6 articles regarding autism spectrum disorder available at: www.cesa7.k12.wi.us/sped/autism/index2.htm
- Solving Behavior Problems in Autism: Improving Communication with Visual Strategies by Linda A. Hodgdon.Quirk Roberts, 1999
- Visual Strategies for Improving Communication by Linda A. Hodgdon. Quirk Roberts, 1999

Resources

- Power Cards; by Elisa Gagnon, 2002.
- The Incredible 5-Point Scale, by Kari Dunn Buron & Mitzi Curtis, 2003.
- TEACCH: www.unc.edu/depts/teacch
- Linda Hodgdon: www.lindahodgdon.com
- Line drawings:

  www.do2learn.com

  www.classroomclipart.com